



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/575,077	04/07/2006	Teruyuki Minami	03284.0059	8664
22852	7590	06/09/2009	EXAMINER	
FINNEGAN, HENDERSON, FARABOW, GARRETT & DUNNER LLP 901 NEW YORK AVENUE, NW WASHINGTON, DC 20001-4413			WILLIAMS, MAURICE L	
ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER		
3611		PAPER		
MAIL DATE		DELIVERY MODE		
06/09/2009		PAPER		

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/575,077	Applicant(s) MINAMI, TERUYUKI
	Examiner MAURICE WILLIAMS	Art Unit 3611

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If no period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED. (35 U.S.C. § 133).

Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 06 February 2009.
 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 2,3,7-11 and 13-15 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
 6) Claim(s) 2,3,7-11 and 13-15 is/are rejected.
 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____

4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
 Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____

5) Notice of Informal Patent Application
 6) Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

2. Claims 2, 3, 8-11, and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Fukagawa et al. (US 5,518,272).

Fukagawa discloses a first and second parallel fuel tank (3, 4), wherein the second tank is lower than the first (Fig. 1);
a longitudinal movement stopping device (10f) redirecting the longitudinal movement of the first tank;
a weakened portion (section of 22) fixed to bottom of support structure (see Fig. 1), which has a width less than the other portions of the support structure (including 12);
left and right rockers (11, 13) extending in the vehicle transverse direction.
Crossrails 11 and 12 comprise a falling out preventing structure which are part of the subframe and prevent the fuel tank from falling out, as the longitudinal direction between the rails is smaller than the diameter of the fuel tank (Figs. 1 and 3).
The positioning of the fuel tank shows that a longitudinal movement of the tank may be caused due to a vehicle collision, while the vehicle is moving forward.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claim 13 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Fukagawa. Fukagawa discloses as discussed above, but does not directly disclose a third fuel tank. However, it would have been obvious to a person having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to include an additional fuel tank in order to provide additional reserve fuel for the vehicle.

5. Claims 7 and 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Fukagawa in view of Skaggs (US 1,523,370). Fukagawa discloses as discussed above, but does not directly disclose fuel successively used from the first, then second tank. Skaggs discloses a first and second fuel tank (2, 7) wherein the fuel is drawn from the first and second tank (Fig. 2). Therefore, it would have been obvious to a person having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify Fukagawa as taught by Skaggs in order to provide a means of drawing reserve fuel once the initial fuel supply is depleted.

Response to Arguments

6. Applicant's arguments, see Remarks, filed 2/06/09, with respect to the rejection(s) of claim(s) 2, 3 and 6-12 under § 102 and 103 have been fully considered and are persuasive. Therefore, the rejection has been withdrawn. However, upon further consideration, a new ground(s) of rejection is made in view of newly found prior art.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to MAURICE WILLIAMS whose telephone number is (571)272-4263. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m..

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Lesley Morris can be reached on (571) 272-6651. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Maurice Williams/
Examiner, Art Unit 3611
Maurice Williams
Examiner
Art Unit 3611

MLW
June 6, 2009

/Lesley D. Morris/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 3611